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10 January 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Distribution

25X1 FROM:

[redacted]
Chief, Production Assessment and
Improvement Division

SUBJECT: Interagency Estimates of the Soviet Threat--
Task 1

1. This memorandum sets forth detailed assignments for accomplishing Task 1 of the project described in my memorandum of January 5 and reflects the discussion of these assignments which we held on January 6.

2. Task 1 should document past trends in interagency products which treat Soviet strategic and general purpose forces and related matters. Specifically, trends in the following six areas should be analyzed:

a. Utilization of "soft data" in interagency products.

25X1 Team: [redacted] (See Tab A for a description of this effort).

25X1 b. Net assessments. Team: [redacted] assisted as appropriate by [redacted] Document the extent to which interagency products make "net assessment" statements: 25X1

- Explicit or implicit judgments about the effectiveness of US/NATO or Soviet/ Warsaw Pact forces in military interactions with the forces of the other side.
- Statements or judgments about Soviet views of the effectiveness of the forces of one side in military interactions with the forces of the other side.

To what extent are these net assessment statements based on analysis or evidence, either discussed in the text or referenced as contained in other intelligence products? To what extent are these statements based on bias or unfounded assumptions?

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c. Treatment of evidence and uncertainty. Team:
Document and analyze the trends in interagency products in the way that evidence for conclusions and judgments is discussed and presented and the way in which uncertainty is treated.

d. Dissents and footnotes. Team: Document the trends in dissenting positions and footnotes in NIEs and other interagency products. Is there a consistent pattern over time in the nature of dissenting views and the identity of dissenting agencies? The purpose of this analysis is to determine if there has been consistent dissent which accords with the views expressed in the Team B report.

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e. Overall impressions. Team:
Document the trend in overall impressions with the readers of NIEs and other interagency products. This should be done primarily by a trend analysis of the Executive Summaries. This subtask should also include an analysis of the way Soviet objectives and intentions are treated.

f. Hard data treated softly. Team: Document the way in which overall judgments and conclusions of NIEs and other interagency products have been influenced by the treatment (or lack of treatment) of certain aspects of strategic or general purpose military forces which seem to be approached quite differently by the USSR as compared to the West. The purpose is to analyze the Team B charge that the estimates mirror US attitudes on these topics rather than explore Soviet views and actions. These topics include military or military-related endeavors not accorded high priority by the US, or R&D areas which the US judges not likely to have a high payoff. Examples are: civil defense, strategic ASW, directed energy weapons, and chemical and biological warfare. Other topics for analysis are non-central systems and tactical nuclear weapons, which may not be adequately treated by US intelligence estimates because of the categories (strategic and conventional forces) into which we divide our estimates; and the burden of defense spending on the Soviet economy and the putative effect of this burden in constraining future growth of Soviet forces.

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3. Tab B is an initial list of interagency products to be surveyed. Please add to this list as you find additional references. Also, we intend to survey selected DIA estimates. is in charge of maintaining and expanding the reading list and will see that the necessary documents are accumulated in Room 6E04.

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4. To meet our deadline of a report to the DCI by January 20, it is essential that your written inputs be given to me not later than the opening of business, Monday, January 17. I suggest that each team designated above provide me with a brief written analysis of the trends in its assigned area, accompanied by an annex that documents the trends in some detail, so that the basis for our conclusions can be inspected by Community organizations at a later date, should they wish to validate or take issue with these conclusions.

5. Tab C is a list of guidelines for conducting the analysis. Tab D is a summary of the Team B report.



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Attachments:

Tab A -- Trend Analysis of "Soft Data"

Tab B -- Interagency Products on the Soviet Military
Threat and Related Topics

Tab C -- Guidelines for Trend Analyses

Tab D -- Judgments About Soviet Strategic Objectives Underlying
National Intelligence Estimates and the Shortcomings
of these Judgments

cc:



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Subject: Interagency Estimates of the Soviet Threat--Task 1

Distribution



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SECRETTrend Analysis of "Soft Data"

Purpose: To document, over time and across the spectrum of Soviet military estimates, the use, misuse, or failure to use "soft data." (Information on Soviet objectives; doctrine; strategy; political, economic, and negotiating efforts. That is to say, relevant information which is not directly related to Soviet weapons systems and force levels.) The primary objectives are to (1) determine the extent to which the B Team claims about the estimating process are valid and (2) provide a basis for determining corrective measures to alleviate the problems identified.

Topics to Cover:

- Does hard data on weapons systems unduly influence the conclusions of interagency products on the Soviet military threat?
- Do the utility and judgments of interagency products suffer from a narrow definition of the "strategic threat" (i. e., equating strategic threat to "strategic nuclear forces")?
- The defensive, as contrasted with offensive, nature of Soviet military forces.
- The deterrent purposes of Soviet forces, as distinct from the war-waging or war-winning purposes of these forces.
- Quantitative and qualitative goals for Soviet forces, relative to those of the US and the West (inferiority? parity? superiority?)
- The thesis that the Soviets will be satisfied with parity and that the arms race will decelerate when the Soviets achieve parity.
- The extent to which Soviet military programs proceed from internal USSR purposes, as contrasted with being reactions to US military programs.

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- Soviet views on the feasibility of military superiority.
- The weight to be given to Soviet speeches, news articles, and other open (non-secret) declarations as indicators of Soviet intentions, as contrasted with the view that these declarations are made for domestic political purposes and are not to be relied upon as indicators of intentions.

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Interagency Products on the Soviet Military
Threat and Related Topics

1968

SM 7-68	Soviet Military Buildup Along the Chinese Border
NIE 11-14-68	Soviet/EE GPF
NIE 11-8-68	Soviet Strategic Attack Forces
NIE 11-17-68	Capabilities of WP Against NATO
NIE 11-4-68	Main Issues in Soviet Military Policy
NIE 64.2-68	Foreign Relations and Military and Economic Aid
SNIE 11-16-68	Soviet Approach to Arms Control
SNIE 11-9-68	Soviet Strategy and Intentions in the Mediterranean Basin (Memo to Holders)
NIE 11-6-67	Soviet Interests in Arab States (published in 1968)

1969

NIE 11-14-69	Soviet/EE GPF
NIE 11-3-69	Soviet Strategic Defenses
NIE 11-10-69	Trends and Prospects in Soviet Maritime Activities
NIE 11/13-69	The USSR and China
SNIE 11-9-69	Current Soviet Attitudes Towards the US

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1970

SNIE 11-12-70	Likelihood of Interference with US Reconnaissance Satellites
NIE 11-14-70	Soviet Forces for Operations in Eurasia
IM 21-4-70	Soviet Politics and Policy: The Next Phase
NIE 11-6-70	Soviet Policies in the Middle East and Mediterranean Area

1971

NIE 11-10-71	Uses of Soviet Military Power in Distant Areas
NIE 11-14-71	WP Forces for Operations in Eurasia
NIE 11-3-71	Soviet Approach to Strategic Defense
NIE 11-8-71	Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Attack
NIE 11-9-71	Soviet Policy in Asia
NIE 11-10-71	Uses of Soviet Military Power in Distant Areas
NIE 80/90-71	Soviet Role in Latin America

1972

NIE 11-3-72	Soviet Strategic Defenses
NIE 11-8-72	Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Attack
NIE 11-10-72	Uses of Soviet Military Power (in distant areas)
NIE 11-12-72	Soviet Military R&D
NIE 11-4-72	Issues and Options in Soviet Military Policy
NIE 11-72	Soviet Foreign Policies and the Outlook for Soviet-American Relations

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1973

NIE 11-13-73	The Sino-Soviet Relationship: The Military Aspects
SNIE 11-4-73	Soviet Strategic Arms Programs and Detente: What Are They Up To?
NIE 11-9-73	The Soviet Approach to Summit II
NIE 11-10-73	Soviet Military Posture and Policies in the Third World
NIE 11-20-73	The Soviet Approach to Force Reductions in Europe
NIE 11-12-73	Soviet and East European Attitudes Toward MBFR
USBSIC 73-01	R&D Trends

1974

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<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 225px; height: 22px;"></div>	Soviet and PRC Reactions to US Nuclear Weapon Employment Policy
NIE 11-15-74	Soviet Naval Policy and Programs
NIE 11-3/8-74	Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict Through 1985
NIO Memo 74-0911B	Soviet Image of US

1975

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IARTCS 889068-75	Soviet Strategic Policies and Force Options Under the Vladivostok Understanding
NIE 11-14-75	Warsaw Pact Forces Opposite NATO
NIE 11-3/8-75	Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict Through the Mid-1980s
<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 136px; height: 30px;"></div>	Soviet Airborne Forces: A Potential Crisis Role?
NIE 11-5-75	The Soviet Assessment of the US

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1975 (continued)

USBSTIC 75-04

Views on Emerging Areas of Science and
Technology Potentially Important to
National Security

1976

IIM 76-012J

Soviet Approaches to Defense Against
Ballistic Missile Submarines

IIM 76-039J

Trends in Soviet Military Programs

Nuclear Weapons: The Ultimate Warning
Problem

NIE 11-3/8-76

Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Conflict
Through the Mid-1980s

NIE 11-10-76

Soviet Military Policy in the Third World

1977

NIE 11-4-77

Soviet Strategic Objectives

NIAM 40/11-1-77

Regional Perceptions of Soviet Naval
Power in the Pacific

IIM

Prospects for Soviet Satellite Interference
with US Satellites

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Guidelines for Trend Analysis

1. Read the Team B report, so as to sensitize yourselves to the issues we are dealing with.
2. Be especially alert for statements and conclusions which are biased or founded on unsupported assumptions.
3. Where important changes in the conclusions of interagency products occur over time, document the nature of the change, the basis for the change, and the extent to which the reason for the change (or, indeed, the fact of a change relative to previous estimates) is discussed.
4. Do not be concerned with documenting the evolution of "hard data" on deployed Soviet weapons or forces. We are more concerned with the evolution of views about the meaning of this hard data.
5. We are not being asked to render an independent judgment on substantive intelligence matters. We are being asked to document trends in the Community's judgments and highlight failures to consider all relevant factors in coming to these judgments.
6. Where possible, identify or speculate on systemic problems in the estimative process or its supporting intelligence base (e. g. , deficiencies in data bases, trained analysts, resource allocations, etc.).

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TAB D WILL BE ISSUED SEPARATELY